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Oil Well Drills To Newcastle, Texas

The private communist technical assistance program for the United States oil industry is likely to be a little embarrassing if it comes off. A Texas oil man has purchased some Russian machinery. It consists of a Soviet-designed turbo drill for oil and gas wells. The Texan thinks the Russian drill is far superior to anything being produced in this country. He's now asking permission for some Soviet engineers to come over and teach us how to use them.

The embarrassment is obvious. Too many Americans have been saying for too long that Soviet Russia is a backward country, technologically inferior to us. They point to the engineers we had to send over in the early days of the Bolshevik Revolution to help develop rich natural resources, and they theorize from the way Soviet industries have sometimes copied our models that there is no engineering genius there. Recently, the Russians have been boasting to the world that we're the backward country, and that socialism is bound to overtake and surpass the capitalist world.

Certainly much of what the Soviet system has accomplished has been built with a healthy assist from the capitalist world. But some shows keen intelligence. The Russian iron and steel industry has made spectacular progress since World War II. Part of it is due to the use of a process known as high top-pressure blast-furnace operation. That was developed by American agencies. But it is not used widely here because there is a question of whether it is economically useful. There is no such question in the Soviet Union. There engineers picked it up, adapted it, and have been scoring record productivity with it.

In the future, the Soviet world may come up with many original advances. Its educational system, as such observers as CIA Chief Allen Dulles and former United States Senator William Benton have pointed out, is far outstripping us in training young technicians. Russians are working in the fields of electronic calculators, radioactive isotopes in chemical reactions, and automatic control of factories — with significant progress in the latter. Their jet aircraft engine design and production seem to be more than adequate. We shall be kidding only ourselves if we think complacently that they are backward and stupid.

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